THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT GREENSBORO

INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY COLLECTION

INTERVIEWEE: Anna Bell Dickieson

INTERVIEER: Hermann J. Trojanowski

DATE: November 5, 2008

HT: Today is November 5, 2008, and my name is Hermann Trojanowski. I am at the home of Mrs. Anna Bell Dickieson to ask some follow-up questions of the interview we did last month. Thank you again for seeing me today, and I'll just let you go ahead and fill in some of the blanks that we didn't cover last time. Then, I had a couple of questions I want to ask you about some things that—

AD: Do you want me to fill in the blanks first or are you going to ask your questions?

HT: Well, let me ask my questions first and that way we'll get that over with and get—Well, during our interview on October 9, you mentioned that Dean [Hugh] Altvater borrowed money from various faculty members, or his wife did rather. Could you elaborate a little bit about that situation?

AD: When my husband first came, one of the first things that the people on the [School of] Music faculty said to him was, "Do not let—do not let—do not let Altvater borrow any money. He will send his wife around because he has borrowed from all of us and he never pays it back." And besides, it was a little odd for the dean to be borrowing from his own faculty, and yet he never seemed to have money. They came here without any furniture. They did not have—apparently, own a house so that they bought a house. They kept moving around from one house to another. And he had his wife go around and do the borrowing. There was always a strange question—It was years before people understood what might have been causing that. Did you want me to elaborate?

HT: Yes, if you don't mind, that would be fine.

AD: Well, Altvater was a violinist. He also claimed to have studied drama, and seemed—I think he should have stayed in it; he seemed to have that personality that made contact when he was playing a part. But he thought he was another Sigmund Freud and liked to treat his violin students in such a way that they would sit around his knee on the floor and he would be God Almighty then. No, I shouldn't have said that. I mean—that they would look up to him as somebody superior. Please delete that.

HT: Okay.

AD: When you get to it. Most of his students, I think, liked him, but he did get involved in a personal way that he shouldn't have with one of the students by claiming that, "I have to make her sick before I can make her well," in order to transfer a psychosis she had developed because of mistreatment by an uncle. And then it turned out that apparently he had—thought his way of making her well was to substitute himself for the uncle. Does that answer you question?

HT: Yes, it does. Right. Well, another follow-up question I'd like to ask is concerning Marc Friedlaender. You mentioned last time that Laura Cone paid Marc Friedlaender's salary for some time. Could you elaborate a little bit on that?

AD: Yes, I would like to refer to my sheet on Laura Cone to do that because I included it. You asked, was she a Communist and I said I don't know except that the Greensboro paper said that she contributed money to the Communist Party. But she also had talked to—talked Dr. [Walter Clinton] Jackson into allowing Marc Friedlaender to join the English faculty by paying his salary herself for several years when he was known for being—as being dismissed from Tulane for being a Communist when he arrived. So, there's another connection there. She and Friedlaender probably were responsible for getting an office on the campus for Tartt Bell who didn't teach anything or have any special connection at all with the College, but he was given an office on the campus in the old Students' Building, when people in the English department in McIver Building were doubling up on offices.

HT: In fact I was going to ask you about him. Who was this Mr. Bell, this Tartt Bell?

AD: Nobody had ever heard of him until he was given an office on the campus and he didn't have anything to teach. But, it was at the time when there was a known Communist group that had rented a house on Spring Garden Street directly across from the Foust Building, the old—

HT: And what period of time was this? In the forties, 1950s?

AD: This would have been in the forties.

HT: Forties. Yes. And so what did Mr. Bell do—?

AD: When I—when—we don't know what he did unless he was responsible for distributing these leaflets in the post office in the middle of the night or helping to organize some of these protests and walks and sit-ins in the chancellor's office and disrupting things that apparently were going on in other institutions as well, but he never had an official or College function. And once the—well, she also—Laura Cone also opened a bookstore. Well, there was nothing wrong with that, except it was at a time when bookstores were beginning to be known as meeting places for the Communist Party to pass on messages and notes like that. There had been—this had been going on at one in Chapel Hill a long time before when Frank Porter Graham was president and Junius Scales from Greensboro—it was sorted out as being a disturber—a disturbing member of the Communist Party. Well, he was from a very influential family here in Greensboro. And

later on he regretted that he'd ever done that, but he was—he was—he was taken in by this kind of thing, and we think Tartt Bell was planted by Laura. Now if she brought Marc Friedlaender here knowing that he was a Communist and had contributed to the Communist Party. She and—she and or Friedlaender, very likely, were the ones that persuaded Dr. Jackson to let him have an office on the campus. Because Jackson apparently liked her and she always—she'd been active ever since she was a student. And at first they had no reason to question her about anything. And there were meetings at her house for a select Communist group. And the reason I know that was that the information came from Elliot Weisgarber who was likely taken to one of the meetings by Friedlaender. And Elliot, apparently, was so thrilled with being in this company that he just couldn't resist talking about it.

But Laura Cone lived on Country Club Drive on a lot that went through to the street behind it. It was Kirkpatrick Place. But there were two houses there. Patti Higgins' house did the same thing; it was next door. And both of them always entered from the back and it was very wooded on the back of Laura Cone's; not quite so wooded on Patti Higgin's. But cars could have easily parked there without being detected or easily having the license numbers read. And so Elliot just simply had to tell that he'd been there and there was an FBI man who came to our house after this had been going on and he said, "Tartt Bell lives around the corner from you." And we wondered if he was probing to see if we'd say, "And the person he takes orders from lives around the corner from him." Because that is about what it would have had been. And as I told you, they had already—the FBI already had permission from the man who lived across the street from Tartt Bell. He had a little cupola on the top of his house and they could observe everybody who came and went from his house from up there and so they already knew about Tartt Bell, but George didn't say anything about Laura Cone living around the corner and maybe he was taking orders from her and so when he didn't, I didn't either and we—I think maybe one reason was that we just, as I told you last time, we simply didn't want to, by association, involve other members of the Cone family who had absolutely nothing to do with this. They'd been wonderful for the city of Greensboro and for the cultural arts and for the University. They're too a good friends.

HT: Do you, by chance, remember the name of the FBI agent who came to visit you?

AD: No, I don't. He was not—it was not Dargan Frierson, but Dargan Frierson was the main one in charge of the Education and he was the one that George dealt with most often. His office, the FBI office at that time, was in what had been the old post office and then later was called the Federal Building, named for Rich Preyer now. And the Communist Party, apparently, they [the FBI] said—they told George, "Every time you come in here, they know it," because they [the "Party"] had rented the upstairs of the building across the street from us. It had been an old auto dealership which was abandoned but the upstairs they were using and watching—looking through the window and watching everybody that came and went into that building. Now, there were some lawyers' offices in there too, but it was also the FBI headquarters.

HT: Right, right. Did you want to add anything more about Laura Cone? Is there any more that you can think of?

AD: No, I think that's all I have.

HT: You mentioned something about Marc Friedlaender. Did Mr.—Dr. Friedlaender and his wife separate or divorce?

AD: They separated. I don't know if they ever really divorced, but they separated because she was not in sympathy. She thought—she thought that he'd gotten over the Communist thing. And I saw their son about a year ago. He and Sam LeBauer, Dr.—well Sam's a doctor himself, had been down here for a special cello session they were having at UNCG at the Music Building and that's when Nancy Shane said—called me and she said, "Oh, be sure to come tonight, I have a surprise for you." And when I got there, the surprise was that Stephen Friedlaender was here and I hadn't seen him since he was a little child. And he told me that his mother had come to live with him, but he didn't mention his father.

HT: And does Stephen Friedlaender live in the area somewhere?

AD: No, he is living in Baltimore [Maryland] and is an architect. I asked him what he finally decided to get serious about, because George had said that he didn't—that he had plenty of ability and talent, but he just didn't practice. He wasn't one to practice that hard. So, I said, "What did you finally get serious about?" And he said, "Oh, I've become an architect." And I said, "Well, that figures, knowing the house that your parents had built." And I said, "I remember when your grandmother gave that magnolia tree for the driveway." He said, "Oh, I went to the—I went to see that house and that tree is huge." I said, "Well, it was large when she gave it to them." It was in the center of a turn around driveway. So he talked about his mother and he talked about old times, but he didn't mention his father. So I am pretty sure they must have either stayed separated or divorced. We heard about Friedlaender. Someone told us that he never had another job to that point; that he was doing what they called, "reading in a library at Harvard." This Communist leader from Duke said she was, "reading at the library at Duke." That was what they said they were doing when they were really leading Communist groups; leading cells, I think they called them.

HT: I see. Yes. Well, you mentioned earlier that there seemed to be some kind of hold that Friedlaender had on Marquis, Dean [George Welton] Marquis—

AD: Oh, he did.

HT: What was that all about?

AD: Well, from the outset, he apparently—now I don't know who appointed Marquis. I don't know if Mereb [Mossman] did or if [Edward Kidder] Graham [Jr.] did. But, as I told you last time, when he first had a party for this own faculty, the Music faculty, he was living in an apartment near the campus and Marc appeared at the door and acted just like the KGB [security agency of the Soviet Union from 1954-1991]. He said, "You've got to come with me to this meeting." There were meetings on Sunday night that this certain

group had and people like Marc were the ones who were in that group. So they took—he took them out of that. Well, a little bit later on the faculty had planned a pounding for—because Marquis had bought a house and when they went—I think a pounding is some old fashion Mid-Western kind of thing when you come and bring a pound of everything to help them set up housekeeping or something like that. [laughs] And who should be sitting there in the living room except Marc Friedlaender and it turns out that he had chosen the house for him even. So I should think that that indicated that he simply ran him. That Marquis was really answering to Graham—I mean to Friedlaender and through Friedlaender to Graham. So—I don't—Marquis simply—we talked about him last time—you remember?

HT: A little bit, yes.

AD: Well, you can add that to what I already said.

HT: All right. You also mentioned last time that the FBI gave a list to I guess the administration at Chapel Hill of the names of the faculty members at WC [Woman's College] who should be let go or should be dismissed.

AD: Not only WC, Chapel Hill and State as well. The whole—they were the three branches of the Consolidated University up to that point; they didn't have any of these other schools.

HT: Right. Do you know—did that happened? Did these people—were they forced out based on this list, to your knowledge?

AD: Yes, I told you that last time. Remember the story about they all left at the same time and all from the music school went to the University of Vancouver.

HT: Right.

AD: And about how a tour guide who took us out of the way up there and said, "This is the Berkeley of Canada?" Well, there was some connection through Norway—that you could get this connection through Norway to go to Vancouver and every one of the people on the music faculty; there must have been five or six of them including Marquis who—

HT: Yes, and Weisgarber as well.

AD: Weisgarber was one of them. They went to the very same place.

HT: Now, what's the connection with Norway? You're talking about the country now right?

AD: I'm talking about the country of Norway. In fact, there was a man [Victor M. Cutter] in the science department—Phil Morgan told George one time, I don't—he wasn't supposed to know that George had—was doing any of these things in connection with the FBI, but for some reason he told George that this man who was supposed to have died of cancer of the throat, he was in the biology department, apparently was—family came from—of

some means. They built a nice house at Sedgefield; another modern house. And he supposedly died and I called his wife and asked if she would like for some of the faculty wives to come and be at the house to receive people, you know. And first she said no, and then she changed her mind. So we went out there and did our duty, if anybody came or not, but Phil Morgan said, "I saw him," Cutter, "I saw him in Oslo [Norway]." So, there may have been some connection, because Scandinavia had its problems, Denmark did too. We were in Denmark, I remember that there was some writing on a brick wall and I asked our guide what is said and it said, "Go home American." It was put there by the Communist Party. Well, at that particular time, their government was calling themselves "Social Democrat," which meant—well, they've always leaned a little bit toward socialism, but they got a lot more for their socialistic dollar than anybody here in this country has ever done. For instance, they did not—they did not lower academic standards or try to destroy. They simply said that you have to choose after graduation from what they call the—something to do with gymnastics.

HT: Gymnasium.

AD: Gymnasium. That's what they call their high school.

HT: Right, it's the same thing in Germany.

AD: Okay. Well, we happened to be there at the time of their graduation and they were all wearing their little caps and staying up all night partying and having this wonderful time. And we went to the big park there and one of them said she was going to university. We saw three of them; one of them was going to university, the other two were going to take the year that was offered to "find themselves." The thing was that you still had to qualify to go to university and you could go free. That was their social system and you could take a year off in between if you wanted to, but they did not lower the standards. And even if you chose to go into a trade, you had to study with an approved master of this craft and be an apprentice until you passed a certain exam. And also, they had—they had a commune that attracted these hippie type people from all over the world when they found out about it to go live there, but the thing was that if you had—if there was a job of any kind open, even if it was on a garbage truck, you had to take it or you didn't get your stipend. So, I think they got a lot more out of their system. The only thing that was really bad was they were under this medical system where you couldn't choose your own doctor and I know our guide said, "My mother needs an operation for cataracts, but she cannot choose her doctor and so she doesn't want to have it and they may have to bring her to America to have the operation done so she can be sure to get a good doctor." And so what was—this was talking about Marquis wasn't it?

HT: Yes, we were talking about Marquis. Right. Well, the next question I wanted to ask you about was Gregory Ivy. You mentioned that he was arrested downtown sometime. Can you elaborate on that a little bit?

AD: Well, that's all I know about it.

HT: Okay.

AD: He simply was arrested for soliciting in the men's room, of all places, at the City Hall downtown, where the police department was also located. [laughs] What nerve. So, but—I knew they had—they didn't have any children and I knew he and Marc Friedlaender wouldn't have had anything to do with it, but apparently it had something to do with his sexual orientation, but that it had nothing to do with his communism.

HT: Right. So as far as you know, he was not involved in a Communist cell or anything like that. He was just a—

AD: I think—it's hard to say because his—you know I told you that his wife didn't want to go to any trouble for the tea we were having for new faculty wives. And I said, "Well the purpose of it is to honor them. Why—if you're not willing to go into any trouble, why have it at all?" And that is when she started putting these things in the newspaper as if to try to—well, I thought it was just nonsense, but it was causing trouble if anybody knew what she was talking about. It didn't make much—I thought that was that, it was all over with, we went on and had our tea and didn't pay any attention to that and—but later on we found out that she was going—had persuaded Chancellor Graham's wife to have lunch with her every day at the Curry cafeteria. So I don't know what influence she was trying to have because, of course, later on Graham and his wife separated too.

HT: Right, right. Well, talking about the Grahams, they did separate and eventually divorce and I think they had two children as I recall? Is that right?

AD: They had two children; they had a girl and a boy and she took the girl and he took the boy. And the boy became the North Carolina organizer for the campaign for [George] McGovern. I think it was McGovern. He was the one that had the first—when they had the meeting where they choose their nominees, you know. The normal thing to do was to choose certain congressmen to be the representatives at that meeting and he had nobody from Congress. He just had people on welfare. He wasn't elected. But, the boy seemed to have the leanings that maybe his father had had.

HT: It was very unusual for that period of that time for—I don't know how old the children were, but to split the children that way and not having to go with their mother.

AD: Yes it was. Usually the mother just got both of them.

HT: Right, right.

AD: Maybe the boy was a little older. I don't know how old he was. But when they separated, she went to Chapel Hill to study to be a librarian and whether she was in the library at the time the reports were destroyed or not; I don't know. I can't imagine she would have had a part in doing it, but I don't know who did it for sure. I have an idea.

HT: And of course, after they divorced—the Grahams divorced, he married Elvira Prondecki.

AD: He married Elvira Prondecki and they had a child.

HT: They did? Okay.

AD: Yes.

HT: Well, I have heard that—

AD: And he had about three jobs after that and each time they were a little bit less and we heard, now I did not hear this first hand, this is by the grapevine, that he eventually ended in an insane asylum. Well, you know he'd been thought to be a strange little boy when he was growing up.

HT: Right. You mentioned that last time. Well, what ever happened to the second Mrs. Graham? Do you have any idea? Mrs. Elvira Graham.

AD: I have no idea what happened to her or the boy. But you see—it was known—it was reported—actually when this got to be such an issue in the College, the treasurer of the College, or the businessman, or whatever—the man who had charge of the budget and all that, he knew that he was paying Elvira Prondecki more money than other people and her job was to be chairman of—well it's Elliott Hall. Do you know that Laura Cone wanted it called the Student Union and they called it that for awhile? Well, the Communist Party was promoting unions. You know the laborer was exalted over the professional. In Russia they were paying laborers more than they were doctors and writers and poets and people like that; that everybody in Russia had been so proud of and had built a wonderful culture; musicians, they were the ones that were sent to Siberia or worse. I don't know what happened to Prondecki-Graham.

HT: Right. The last question I wanted to ask you before you add some more things on your own is that you mentioned that L. Richardson Preyer gave a speech on Founders Day.

AD: Yes.

HT: And I think it was telecast. And do you, by any chance, know exactly what he said that upset Chancellor Graham so much?

AD: I don't really remember except that I think he had done some work for the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] maybe when he was a judge.

HT: Right. He was a judge at the time.

AD: Yes. And he knew more about Graham than any of the faculty did, obviously, because it upset Graham so terribly. We watched it on television and that's why we could see the facial expressions when he was speaking and afterwards and as I told you last time, the man that pulled the curtain said he knows that he's been hit, or something to that effect,

when he came off the stage. And so I called Emily [Preyer] the next day and said—Emily and Rich [Preyer] had been great supporters of George's and friends of ours and I called her and said, "We saw it on TV last night and it certainly was an impressive speech he made," or something to that effect. I can't remember his words. I'm not sure that the people on the faculty in the audience got it as well as we did, at first. But she said, "He was very nervous." I mean that was—he was taking a chance to get up there and expose Graham for what he knew about him when he—first year he came. So they knew something about him too, but they didn't elaborate on after that speech but—

HT: Was his speech right before Chancellor Graham resigned?

AD: No, it was earlier than that.

HT: Earlier than that. Oh.

AD: It was before the—it was before the faculty even had gotten that much disturbed.

HT: Oh, I see.

AD: It was early, early when he—after he came.

HT: Okay. I see.

AD: But he knew about the circumstances under which he'd come apparently. So much of this, I guess, could seem like just circumstantial evidence but when you start putting all the pieces of the puzzle together, after a while, you begin to get a picture.

HT: Well, what did you want to—what else did you want to add to the interview that I haven't asked.

AD: All right. Let's see. Archives—Laura Cone, we've already been over that haven't we? How [Herbert] Hazelman blackmailed [Lee] Rigsby and then Kim Harriman and Rigsby both left because of him, and how Mereb [Mossman] got control. You see Mereb, it was reported, had to leave when all the group of Communists left. It wasn't just the School of Music, as I told you; it was across College, across University. Anybody that the FBI had anything on, and it was reported that Mereb was among them at which time, apparently, Dean [Lawrence] Hart was—I think it was Hart who was—yes, it was Hart. Anyway, we think that probably Laura Cone had persuaded them to let Mereb come back. You see, they were expecting—Laura Cone had already given quite a bit of money to the College to go into Elliott Hall, or the Student Union as she wanted it called, and they got away from that. And she had promised that she would—one day she would give money for a chapel, non-denominational chapel, to go on the campus. And they were probably thinking that they would get more money out of her and so I think Bill Friday just let her back in because he came up here when she died and brought a contingent from Chapel Hill with him and praised her for getting along with all the chancellors. Well, that was just pragmatic. She already had all the power because we're getting to the time then that a

chancellor wasn't an academic person anymore; a chancellor was a fundraiser. And you know how it's that way all over the country.

HT: Oh yes.

AD: Used to be that the chancellor was an academic person. Dr. Jackson was; he was—he had been a professor of history. Then before him it had been Dr. [Julius I.] Foust and Dr. [Charles D.] McIver who founded the College.

HT: Right.

AD: So, we think maybe Laura Cone must have been the one to persuade him because she never gave up on—I think she liked the feeling of sort of running things because Jackson was easy to get along with. There weren't that many problems, you know, of such a nature that we've been talking about. And, of course, it was smaller then. It was very disruptive. Everything—it seemed that everything they did, and including the protestors, they were always against something, but they never came out with a solution. And yet when it was the Communist Party deciding things, they were always destructive. They were—they were saying that they were to improve thing, but it meant just the opposite. It was beginning—quite a few words, the meanings completely changed during that period.

HT: I do have a question concerning the Communist cells, you said they had rented a house or gotten a house on Spring Garden [Street] across from the Foust Building?

AD: Yes. It was on the corner of Spring Garden [Street] and Highland Avenue, as well as I remember, directly across from the Foust Building which had been the administration building.

HT: Did they rent that or was it somebody's—

AD: I think they rented it.

HT: Rented it, okay.

AD: I wouldn't know for sure, but that was my impression. And people knew that certain faculty members were seen going in and out of that or parking in a car on Highland Avenue beside it. Weisgarber and Ivy very often were seen there.

HT: But did anyone live in the house, to your knowledge, or was it just used as—

AD: Not at that time, I think it was just a Communist headquarters. Undoubtedly, it had been somebody's house at one time. I don't know whose. But there were houses in between—there were about three houses. Dr. [Anna] Gove lived on Highland Avenue.

HT: But unfortunately there is only one house left on Highland Avenue, everything else has been torn down for parking lots or buildings.

AD: Well, they gradually—the part up right up next up the railroad became parking lots and that kind of thing but there was the Benbow family that lived a little bit further down. There was a grocery store and a drugstore on the corner where the art gallery is now and there was also a service station and a dry cleaner along there on Spring Garden Street. That's all College buildings now.

HT: Well, is there anything else that you can think of that might be pertinent to the conversation?

AD: Number three —yes, there was one—I thought you might be interested in Jordan Kurland. He came here possibly after this all started, but he taught Russian and he had a little boy that was about the age of our little girl and they were in school together, about the same age we used to invite him to come play once in awhile and we were friends with the Kurlands. We went to a party at their house one night and there was a young woman from Norway with a noble title at that party who was a friend of theirs. Well, Eugene Pfaff in the Department of History was also kind of teased by the students before any of this got started as having Communist leanings because, for instance, when they had—they used to have sort of a take off on the faculty once a year, the seniors did, and they had Eugene Pfaff pose with his feet up on the desk and brilliant red socks on as if that were to indicate something. Sort of like when they borrowed some things from George one time they were going to do a take off on the trio and Betty Cowling came out and said, "Oh George, I broke my G string." Well anyway, it was kind of a funny thing that they were—you know, it's supposed to be amusing, but they were making fun of him being a Red, I think, to have red socks like that.

Well, at this point in time after the party and that sort of thing, the State Department sent some people including Jordan Kurland and Eugene Pfaff. The State Department sent [Eugene] Pfaff to Spain and Jordan Kurland to Russia and I don't know what their directions were except that they were going as representatives of the State Department to observe or do something. And Jordan Kurland said that they wouldn't let his family in; he had to leave his family in Holland to live when he went there. And he came back saying that his wife—his wife and son were not allowed to enter the country with him. He left them in Holland and that all the Jews were forced to live in a certain village and people couldn't travel from one town to another. And that several families lived in one apartment, assigned to them by the Party and they thought they were well off because they had enough potatoes to eat. Well, he came back all full of this and said he became convinced that the [Communist] Party and the KGB were anti-Semitic and lectured to the Alumni Association. I heard him make one of these speeches and elsewhere about his experiences there. And his wife came to visit me after that to tell me about all this and I think she was trying to, in her own way, say we had been taken and didn't know it. I don't know if they were Jewish or not, but that may have been the reason he was particularly interested in the way they treated Jews.

HT: How do you spell his last name?

AD: K-U-R-L-A-N-D. I remember one time he asked Mereb Mossman—his name was Jordan Kurland—he asked Mereb Mossman for a Cyrillic typewriter to help him in his teaching

and [she] didn't know what a Cyrillic typewriter was. [laughs] She didn't even know they used a different kind of alphabet. Well, anyway, he thought that that was sort of strange. [laughs] So, I wanted to—I did want to add that. Let me see if there's something else. Well, I think I have a little bit more here. I got through this about Friedlaender and Marquis and the house and all that, didn't I.

HT: Yes.

AD: Did I cover last time when Friedlaender first came to George and said, "We have plans for [School of] Music?"

HT: Yes.

AD: I thought I did.

HT: Right. And they wanted to start the School of Fine Arts. Yes.

AD: That's right. And that would have meant that the School of Music would have just reverted to a department. And George said, "I will fight to the end the destruction of the School of Music." It turned out to be more than the School of Music. It turned out to be the whole College and extended into the University. State College had what they called a Student Union too. I had a cousin who was—had, I guess, the same job [Elvira] Prondecki had up here at this one, down there. She'd majored in art at Woman's College, but that's what she was doing. Married a professor from down there, but they called that the Student Union. But, you see, they made a big thing of targeting college age students. At that point, they weren't as old as they are now, for one thing. They were a little less mature, and easily influenced by something that could sound so idealistic and don't forget that they're being idealistic at one time and at the same time, they're being—

[End Tape 1, Side A—Start Tape 1, Side B]

AD: —at the time they want to be rebellious of authority and so they took advantage of that. So they were against everything and for anything that seemed radical, not knowing, actually, what they were getting into. I don't—I really don't—I really think that they probably—

[recording paused]

—Well, I'd like to add a little about Rigsby after deciding that he must go along with Mereb for his own good. Edward Benjamin, Sr. After George sent him a recording of the Greensboro Symphony, he said that he had three other recordings of the work, but he liked George's the best. He came to a recital of the chamber orchestra and offered George

his annual Quiet Music commission for a composer of George's own choice and a performance of one of the groups. George had planned to give the money to Samuel Barber because he had been known, up to that point, for some very beautiful Quiet Music, but Rigsby took it away and gave it to a friend of his who was supposed to have been a composer saying it was not George's job to receive money for the College or to take trips to solicit new students when he'd been doing it for years. Well, he knew all the orchestra and band directors all over the state and the high schools and would go to them and ask them to recommend their best students to come here. It was a good thing and it was something that Altvater probably should have been doing, but he didn't and George just somehow filled in and did these things because it was develop—and there was one thing that you have about Altvater; he didn't ever stop George from doing anything. He didn't do anything for him either, but he certainly didn't keep him from doing anything. And it was just—George felt, well, he was in the right place at the right time. He was lucky. He was doing something he loved. Well, anyway, we thought he should—we thought they should have been thankful that he was getting money or soliciting—getting students and that kind of thing. Why not? I think he should have told Benjamin that it had been taken out of his hands so he could rescind the order—offer—but he didn't. And so, the composition; George played the composition, but it surely wasn't Quiet Music, it was not Quiet Music.

Rigsby also double-billed on George's symphony music allowance. George checked with his secretary when he noticed that the funds were getting too low and she said that the reason—that was the reason. He was double-billing and keeping half of the money for himself. He did the same thing when ordering records. He'd stack them up in his office and never put them in the record department, you know, what they called "listening room." And he did it with pianos. When it came time to buy new pianos, they'd always dealt with Steinway and sent some of the piano faculty to try out the pianos. But Rigsby bought Kwai. Now that was a new Japanese brand that was—it was really very new then. I'm sure the Japanese wanted very much to sell it. But he chose those because they gave him a piano and [one to] his friend Harold Luce whom he brought with him from Florida State. I think I told you about the people who knew in advance that if he hadn't brought Harold Luce, he would.

Harold Luce was his former graduate student, I think, a graduate student in Chapel—in Florida State that he had become enamored of. And the next year Rollin Godfrey [Godfrey came here from Florida State] was in the Registrar's Office here. He played trombone in George's orchestra and he was the first one that asked George, "Did he bring Harold Luce with him?" And George said, "No." And he said, "Well, he will." Sure enough, by the next year, he made a job for him as sort of chief office boy. I think he gave him the band after that. But then when they left—when he went to Ohio State, Rigsby took Luce with him. And he renovated an unfinished upstairs that had a finished stairway, but an unfinished attic, I guess. And that was off limits to his family. He and Harold Luce would go up there and study. [laughs] I guess George really got him a job. It was—people were beginning to think that Rigsby's days were numbered because of the things, I don't know—anyway, a friend of George's from college days had been in music at the same time. He came by George's office one time and said he wasn't in music anymore, that he was assistant to the president of Ohio State and was looking for a new head of music. Well, believing that Rigsby had already been asked to look for another

position, George told him that Rigsby was just the man, that he needed a larger school than this one, which might have helped his situation. And so Rigsby was employed by Ohio State to be the dean and took Harold with him. And at first, he must have gotten well—along very well because Ohio State formed a School of Fine Arts and he became the head of that and made Luce the head of the Music. But you see the head of a School of Fine Arts could be anything. It could be anything from English to art to anything. And it might not even be somebody that knows anything about your field—well not somebody in music. The School of Music is the thing to have. It's a step up when you're not a Department of Music any longer, but a School of Music.

Then we heard that Rigsby was drinking too much and eventually became an alcoholic. Rigsby probably never even knew that George had recommended him for the job and George said that it was the only thing he'd ever done that he thought was less than honorable. But he did get him a job when he probably needed a job, but George had ulterior motives for making sure that he was out of the way because he was under Mereb's thumb. Well, at one time, Harold had told George that he and—had told Harold—had told George that he and George were the only friends that Rigsby had left on the faculty and that was about true; all had abandoned him. But George said, "Well, he hadn't done anything to me," and asked advice on things, especially what to do about the blackmail. One day—did I tell you about what he said to George last time?

HT: I don't recall. I remember blackmail was mentioned.

AD: He came to George and he said, "They're accusing me of being a homosexual and what would you do about it?" By "they" he meant [Herbert] Hazelman and these two people he brought with him. He actually had this committee to come and visit him because he said, "I can get you out anytime I want to." And he had told Kim Harriman that, "If I can control the—if I can control the dean of the School of Music, I can control music in Greensboro." He was always interfering because he wanted the control something he didn't—he wanted to absorb. He wanted to be "Mr. Music" of Greensboro and that kind of thing. So, he had said—he had—he threatened him that he could get him out anytime he wanted to by just telling—telling the superintendent or whatever it took. And George said, "So." I told you that George said, "If it's not true, I'd get a good lawyer." But he never did.

And then later on, when the thing came up about—Miles Wolfe and Hazelman were both in on this. Miles Wolfe was the editor of the *Greensboro News* and chairman of the Chamber of Commerce—president of the Chamber of Commerce at that time. And the Chamber of Commerce was interested, of course, in getting new businesses in Greensboro and particularly non-polluting types of things and so he wanted to—he wanted the city to be responsible for all of the cultural things, not the College or anything like that. He wanted that out and he wanted to use City Beautiful. [City Beautiful was sponsored by the Greensboro Council of Garden Clubs.] It was a good idea. It worked. It was when they got—I know for one they got Ciba-Geigy, except it was just like wanting to take over—take charge of something that somebody else had built. And so, there again, Rigsby came to George and he said—about the orchestra, he said, "They want it out in the town and I'm going to give it to them to get them—to get them off my back." And George said, "You can give it to them, but it won't get them off your back. Because"

he said, “When blackmailers get away with it, when it works, that’s not going to deter them from doing it again,” So, when blackmail works, it never discourages the blackmailer. George told me privately that he had taken the symphony about as far as it could go anyway, under the circumstances. It would be better off with a business manager, and I told you all that before. Hazelman’s interest in it was probably that he always wanted to be the conductor himself, but that never happened. They had—when they started hiring other conductors, they never considered Hazelman to do it. He was the high school band director who had ambition and that was about it. [I know he tried blackmail on Rigsby, and I believe he tried it on Altvater when they first came.]

I guess—I think I will add—that it didn’t work if they thought that they had to destroy George’s image because he was so identified with the College and they wanted to get everything out of the College including the civic music and the lecture series; everything like that. And it didn’t work, because too many people knew what George had done; but they tried. George went on anyway. I’ve written here that climbing up on dead bodies was Hazelman’s style, and not only with George, he treated everybody that he thought might be in his way like that, even the orchestra director in the city schools in High Point. She said—she told George that Hazelman—she didn’t get along at all with him. He tried to destroy her and yet—well, anyway, there’s no use going—he’s not all that important, as I told you. He told George they didn’t get along because George ignored him. Remember, I told you that story. Met him downtown on the street when we still shopped downtown. He said, “You know why we don’t get along?” George said, “Herb, I didn’t know we didn’t get along.” “Well, we don’t, the reason is because you ignore me and I can’t stand to be ignored.” [laughter] Little people.

Well, now the University can be proud that Greensboro Symphony Orchestra started in the Woman’s College of the University of North Carolina and always has had connections with it, which has been beneficial to both the Symphony and the—.

Now there was something else I wanted to add about Hart and then I think that’s all. There might be something about Betty Cowling. Long after retirement—George retired before Hart, but we didn’t move to Well Spring for quite a while. We stayed—we lived at home. And so Hart had already moved to Well Spring. When we started thinking about coming out here, George liked the place but he said, “After all, Larry Hart already lives there.” And I said, “Well, I don’t think I’d consider that a problem at all because you don’t have to say anything about it whatsoever and if he starts anything, you have a lot more on him than he does on you.” [laughs] So, we were cordial with one another and he wanted to leave the impression with people, I think, that we—that we were friends because he really, I think, felt a little bit guilty for the things that he had prevented George from doing and the way he had had to treat him in order to get along with Mereb. Such as telling new faculty not to have anything to do with him and being the one to assign other people to other—even when students would come and want to study with a certain person—we knew of one student who came here specifically to study with George and he said, “I decide with whom students study.” And he’d assigned them. And when it came to things like scheduling recitals and performances, they had always just signed a calendar and when there was a free time they could sign up for what they pleased, but Hart had to pass on everybody who could perform. So, he might have—that might have been on his own, it might not, but when it came time for the examiners for your requalification for the National Association of Music Schools, guess whose classes Hart

sent them—he sent them up to? George's. So, he was playing a double game and he knew it.

And when George died, he gave a five hundred dollar memorial to Well Spring in his memory. He didn't give it to the School of Music, but I had the feeling that he knew that he had done things that weren't quite—but he had to preserve his own job, and of course, that's the conclusion that Rigsby had come to too. And he told George, "I called Rigsby." And this was after we both lived out here. He said, "I called Rigsby when I accepted the job." You know, I guess to get his advice. So, apparently Rigsby told him, "Well, if you get along with George Dickieson, you won't—I mean, you have to get along with Mereb Mossman, and so anything she wants you to do—." That must have been what Rigsby told him.

But then—so we were never—we never had dinner together or anything like that. We were just cordial when we spoke to each other. He died. No, his wife died. He's still living. His daughter has—keeps a connection with the School of Music. I have no idea if she realizes that all of this went on and I certainly wouldn't bring it up with her. She's nice enough and why try to make any trouble? Phil Morgan knew him when he was a—Hart, when he was a student—they were both students at Eastman [School of Music]. And he said, when he first heard about it, he said, "Why are they bringing him?" This was Hart. He said, "He forgot on his recital and walked off the stage and never came back." So I guess he must have changed his major from piano to get his doctorate, which he apparently had. But he may have gotten it in accompanying because when he came here, he decided who could and couldn't play. He never gave a piano recital himself, but he liked playing for singers; accompanying for singers. Well, that's a good thing. Now they have a major in accompanying and they did not then. But it's an art to be a good accompanist for any singer or instrumentalist and that kind of thing.

So anyway—and Phil Morgan—Phil Morgan was a wonderful performer. He was in the Navy when they hired him, but he was due to be released before the year was out and so they brought his wife who had also majored piano at Eastman, to fill in for him until he came and then when he did arrive, they needed another piano teacher anyway for the piano students. Well, they had some people who were not music majors who wanted to take piano lessons and things like that. They needed another piano teacher, so they kept her too. Well, she was probably a good teacher, but Phil was a really good performer and he was the one that George always liked to play—he played three concerti and I don't know how many trios with him.

One time when—Inga [Morgan] had relatives back in Sweden, her name was Inga Borgstrom before she married Phil Morgan. And so she went back and played, I think in her little church when she went back there and went back to see relatives and so she was in Sweden visiting her relatives one time and Phil called us on the phone and said he had been listening some chamber music on the radio, were we listening to that program? And I said, "Well, no, at the moment we weren't." We had a record on, but then—so, I guess I thought, "Well, Phil if you're lonely with Inga gone, come on and have dinner with us or would you rather wait until Inga comes back?" And he said, "No, I'd like to come now." So he came and we had a wonderful evening, you know, cocktails and enough to make for three instead of two. And it turned out that the real reason that he wanted to come must have been that he wanted to tell George that the best years of his life had been when he was playing with George.

Now Phil had had a massive heart attack in Sweden, by the way, visiting her friends when he had tried this trick of going into the sauna and sweating and then going into the ice cold water; had a terrible heart attack. And so he had had to retire on disability, but he came over before he died. He wanted to come over and tell George that the best—and it was a good time for George too. George loved having him to play. He was a—he just had one of these natural talents. I'm not sure that maybe he was as a good a teacher as Inga. The piano teachers seemed to think Inga was the better teacher, but Phil, was by far the better pianist, especially [Johannes] Brahms, [Bela] Bartok. He played the third Bartok piano concerto with George. That was—that's not easy to do for the orchestra or the pianist. It has—it has rhythms that change every few measures, it has—but it is a magnificent, strong work and he played it with mastery.

I think Betty Cowling was awfully jealous. She had asked George and me to come over. It was obvious that she couldn't stand it, it had been such a good—she'd asked Phil to come too and Phil made an excuse he had to go to High Point which I don't think he did, but he just didn't want to go. But Betty, Betty was a person who—well, when it came to all this Graham trouble, she always wanted to be sure she was on the winning side and so she would change from one side to the other depending on who she thought was coming out. I remember Friedlaender came to George one time and said, "What side are cellists on this year?" Well, because she'd gone over to Friedlaender's side at first, and then she went back."

But when the thing was all over, now this is an interesting thing, when the investigating committee made its decision and Graham had to go, she was on the other side and even though sides—neither side was supposed to have won which was the biggest mistake he [William Friday] could have made, I think. It didn't quiet things down. But she actually reserved a room in Elliott Hall in which she wanted to give a lecture. Well, we didn't go. We didn't have any interest in what she had to say. Some of the students went and they said that she was trying to explain how she won the Graham fight. Well, she was on the other side that wasn't supposed to have won; after all, he had to go. Well, Hart went, and he told George, he said, "I went to hear it, but I didn't know what she was talking about." You see, he said he didn't know a thing about that. He just had been told, apparently, that he'd better get along with Mereb, but he didn't know about all of this that had gone before. So, that's that. I think that is all. Just cut.

HT: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

AD: I hope I have been of some help and I hope I haven't rambled. I know I've rambled and I hope it's intelligible.

HT: I think so.

[End of Interview]